The Bishop's Bee, page 1971.

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ROYAL AND SOCIETY NEWS

Exclusive to "Modern Life."

King George Still Refuses to Create any more Peers.

Once again has my exclusive information in regard to the King's refusal to create any more political peerages been justified by events. The outstanding feature of the New Year's Honours was the entire absence of any promotions to the House of Lords. Two peers got a step up, but not a single Britisher came in for a coronet. Readers of MODERN LIFE will remember the categorical account I gave last January of how Mr. Asquith was compelled to withdraw certain names which he had submitted to his Majesty for promotion, for the simple reason that the King would not sign the patents! His Majesty had enough of peer-making during the first four years of his reign, and he knew well the agonies which King Edward went through when it came to putting his autograph to some of the peerage-patents proposed by Mr. Asquith and his predecessor, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

* * *

The Men Who Really Deserve Decorations.

Of course, should the Government decide to go to the country during the war, there will be a special honours list, but at present the King is putting an absolute embargo upon all politicians in the Lords, and for the first time the recent list was almost entirely official. Which is as it should be. I have before pointed out that the men who really deserve decorating are the men who are unostentatiously doing their country's work at the ends of the Empire, not the hack scribblers of the London papers whose names are always in the public eye, and who thus acquire a fame entirely out of proportion to their worth.

* * *

"Anybody Can Write a Book Nowadays."

I have no objection, however, to Sir Henry Newbolt's knighthood. Somebody in the literary world had to be honoured, I suppose, lest the leader-writers got an opportunity for their usual growl that "men of real genius had been forgotten." So many silly people nowadays think that the only people who possess genius are people who write books. As a matter of fact, anybody can write a book nowadays.

* * *

The King's Embargo on Actor-Knights.

Mr. Cyril Maude, too, is still waiting for his knighthood. Two only of the five years have passed which have got to elapse from the time Forbes-Robertson was knighted until another actor is accoladed, and it will be another three before we have "Sir Cyril Maude." But by that time Sir Cyril will be as rich as Sir Squire Bancroft, and will probably retire from "the perfesh!" Probably no actor has made more money at his age than Mr. Cyril Maude, but if one were to believe the fabulous stories of the Bedford Street Bodega, one would be thinking it rather a shame that a millionaire should still be "earning money a-play-acting."

* * *

"Turns"—and the Salaries They Don't Earn.

No one believes an actor's story, however. Why it is that theatrical folk are such terminological inexactitudinarians, I can't say. Music-hall folk invariably make me smile at the sheer wealth of imagination which they possess, and to get amongst a crowd of "turns" and hear the fabulous sums they are all earning per week—well, I have seen them laugh at their own lies.

* * *

Romance amongst the Balfours.

When Mr. Arthur Balfour gave a ball at Carlton House Terrace for his charming young relative, Lady Beatrice Cecil, Lord Salisbury's eldest daughter, Society was immensely interested, for it was the first time such a thing had occurred, and, strange to say, it was a success, for the lady has now for years been the wife of Lord Harlech's son and heir. Arthur, of course, is an obstinate bachelor himself, though he doesn't look any the worse for it. And he is still game for a touch of romance; and the other day he turned up at a wedding where the atmosphere was electric.

* * *

Another Hustled War Wedding.

It was, too, a purely family affair—one young Balfour marrying another young Balfour—and in very truth it took place with the proper concomitant of "gathering tears and tremblings of distress." The bride was Lady Betty Balfour's eldest daughter Ruth, and her fiancé was her first cousin, Captain E. W. S. Balfour, the Adjutant of the 5th Dragoon Guards, who had been at the front ever since Mons, and was given six days' leave to come over and marry his lady-love, and do what he could to console his parents for the loss of his elder brother, Captain R. F. Balfour, who was killed at Gheluvelt on October 29.

* * *

Why They Do it!

All the Balfours were in black, and the wedding took place with a rush at Whittingehame Church. Mr. Balfour's austere-looking "brither" Gerald, the father of the bride, was chief amongst the Balfour crowd, the bridegroom's father, Mr. Balfour of Balbirnie, being laid up with a chill, and therefore unable to be present. The bridegroom had to pop back to France at once, so exactly why these young things marry each other in these circumstances is something of a mystery. Still, let us hope they will be all the happier in their minds for having got somebody to think about when they are separated. It cheers a man up in the trenches to think that he's got something very nice and new at home!

* * *

Egypt's New High Commissioner: a Perspiring Moment.

Cairo will have a good man behind the new Sultan in Sir Henry McMahon. I only met the new High Commissioner once. He was in a bad temper just then, but he had good cause. The Governor of Bombay was waiting amidst a crowd of officials to receive the King of Afghanistan (otherwise the Ameer of Kabul, as he is always referred to east of "Constant."), and the Ameer still lingered amongst his womenfolk. It was an embarrassing moment for the Man from Swat. But he rose to the occasion. Exactly how he whipped up the lazy Afghan monarch to get himself into his general's red I do not know. But it was done, and when the big *tamasha* took place there was Harry McMahon as cool as a cucumber, and looking as if he had just stepped out of a band-box.

* * *

Almost Unknown to His Own Regiment.

For Sir Henry is nothing if not smart. In evening clothes, with his C.M.G. in the centre of his dicky, he is the dandiest diplomat in the service. Yet his life has been spent almost entirely in the far north-west.

His father was an Indian general; his mother came from the 93rd Highlanders, and "the 93rd" stands for a lot amid the boulders of Baluchistan.

* * *

Harry McMahon Very Pleased with Himself.

Sir Henry is a Sikh officer himself, but has been on the diplomatic side in so many agencies and frontier campaigns that he is now almost unknown to the officers of his own old regiment. He is a fine linguist, full of tact, and when he left King George in the Palace the other day, just prior to setting out for Egypt, he looked uncommonly pleased with himself. Indian politicals have always been a success in Egypt, so there is no reason why Sir Henry McMahon should not be.

* * *

The King and the Actors.

I have often pointed out that King George is the first of our sovereigns who has always been a profound friend of "the Profession," and the afternoon preformance at the Palladium last year is to be followed by a special matinee at Covent Garden in February for the Actors' Benevolent Fund, which is just now doing so much to relieve the misfortunes of music-hall and theatrical folk. But the adumbration of the special point about "the way actors stand by others when in trouble" in his letter to the Actors' Emergency War Fund does the King no small credit.

For by so doing his Majesty has brought home to the whole British public the simple fact that no class of Britishers so unselfishly accord their talents to objects of charity whenever they are called upon; and now that they are so seriously hit by the war, they deserve to be remembered by the people. King George and Queen Mary will both be present at Covent Garden on the afternoon of February 2nd, when "The School for Scandal" will be played by stars, and a good sum is hoped to be raised.

* * *

The King amongst the Wounded Tommies.

King George and Queen Mary, as has been said before in these columns, are the hardest working people in Britain in these arduous times. His Majesty frequently changes his clothes half-a-dozen times a day, and both he and the Queen have every minute of the day filled up with public duty. The other day they suddenly turned up at the 1st London Territorials' hospital in Camberwell, where many officers and men lay wounded, back from the front. Nothing cheers the men up like this ready desire of the Sovereigns to share their soldiers' sorrows as well as their victories.

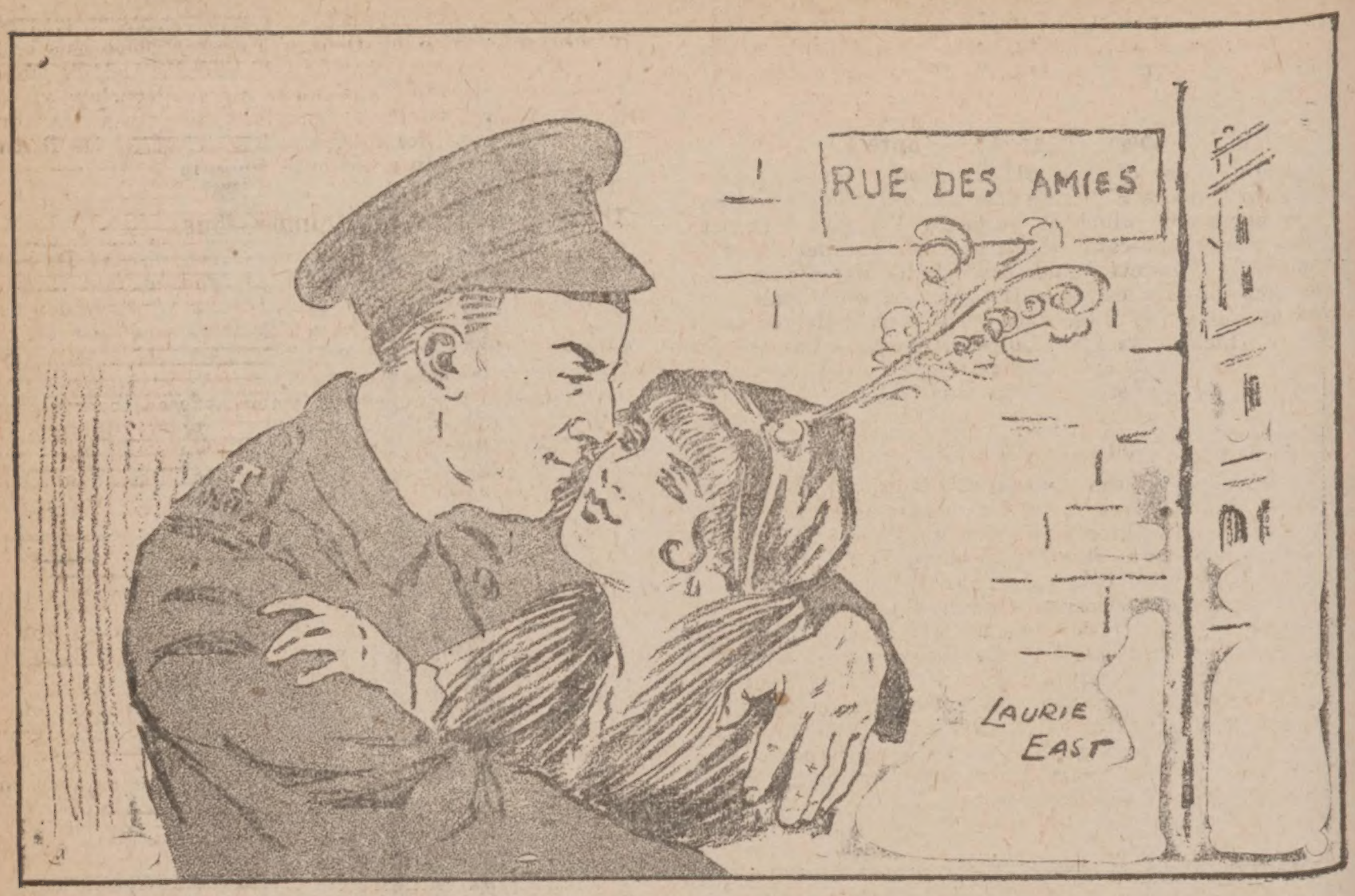
A friend from Boulogne tells me that when he handed out the gifts from King George, Queen Mary and Princess Mary at the Women's Hospital in Paris to the English soldiers lying there, the French soldiers in the same large room shed tears at the sight of the loyalty with which our wounded Tommies saluted the little tokens from Buckingham Palace as they stepped up with their crutches to receive them.

* * *

The Kilted Volunteers and the "Daily Mail."

You know what I said about the London Scottish, and the way they were taken up from Paris in comfortable London motor-'buses to have their baptism of fire, and, incidentally, to assist recruiting by being boosted for days on end by all the papers that come from Carmelite Street and Printing House Square, until the name of the

"I see that the price of sugar has gone up again."
"Not surprised! It's a natural result when Kaisers and Emperors start raising Cain."



FRENCH LEAVE.

London Scottish nearly stank in the nostrils of the boys of the Old Brigade, who had been freezing and sneezing in the trenches for three solid months without getting a line anywhere! And what I said about that has found an echo in thousands of British homes where the photographs of unkilted Tommies decorate the walls. Military annals have no parallel to the snobbery over the London Scottish, and the *Daily Mail* will be execrated for decades in consequence for it. The unfortunate thing about it all is that that sort of thing has got to be done.

* * *

"Princess Pat's Pets."

It's a painful admission to have to make, but it is true. While Old England continues to be plastered with bills entreating, begging and praying of the lads to go and fight for *their own country*, under the so-called "voluntary system," every trick that will bring a boy to the colours has got to be resorted to. Hence the incident of the London Scottish has had its little parallel in Canada. While for months past over thirty thousand gallant lads from Canada have been training for the war on Salisbury Plain, and have only now got their chance of getting on to foreign soil (the South of France, too!), the particular regiment which from purely superficial reasons may be a means of boosting recruiting has been popped off to the front, and was actually under fire within a week of its arrival.

This is the regiment known as "Princess Pat's Pets," and as kissing goes by favour, even in the matter of getting shot at, the "Pets" have become the first Canadian regiment to get salted in the firing-line, and, incidentally, to buck the slackers up to the glory of war. Fortunately, we believe the "Pets" have been successful in both ways, so we ought not to complain.

But this sort of thing creates a lot of grousing amongst the boys, and no wonder. Anything like favouritism gives Tommy his chance for a growl, and you bet he never misses an opportunity.

"The Poor Old Corps that Doesn't Advertise!"

And, mark you, it isn't only the men of the old English line regiments who feel their neglect all the more keenly for these outbursts of silly sentimentality over a corps which wears the kilts. Oh, dear, no. Why, the Lowland Scots feel it even more than, say, the Lincolns or the Suffolks. "This poor old corps is absolutely unknown to the public, but we don't wear kilts, and we don't advertise." So said poor Camille Clifford's gallant hubby, Harry Bruce (Lord Aberdare's ill-fated son) in a letter home just before he was bowled over.

And which do you think is the regiment that Harry Bruce called "this poor old corps"? Why, no other than the magnificent Royal Scots, the oldest regiment in the British Army, and one of which I can from close personal knowledge tell you without fear of contradiction that there is no body of soldiers in the wide to lick them!

* * *

The Scots Who Don't Wear Kilts.

How often have I cheered these young devils on the Oval in Bombay, when they have carried off the Agha Khan soccer cup against all comers from all the cantonments in India! How often have I ridden alongside the Royal Scots in toggers and shorts at six o'clock o' the morning when they were doing their four-mile double to Malabar Hill and back before brekker, getting as fit as fiddles and as hard as nails, and making themselves ready to show the waiters what British lads can do when they have been trained in the Shiny! Yet this "poor old regiment" (one of the grandest ever created) never gets a word in the papers. It doesn't wear kilts, you see.

* * *

The Gloom of the P.M.G.

What strange gloom is this which has fallen upon the *Pall Mall Gazette* lately? By the way, the *P.M.G.* the other day said "the oldest baronetcy belongs to Sir Thos. Esmonds, whose creation dates from 1629." What

about Sir Hickman Bacon, who has two baronetcies, both of which began before Sir T. Esmonde's? Sir Hickman is eleventh baronet of Redgrave, which was created in 1611, and he is also twelfth baronet of Mildenhall, which was created in 1627, and is the premier baronet of England.

* * *

Radical Members Great Title-hunters.

Several other of the 1611 baronetcies exist. Moreover, Sir Thomas Esmonde does not own even the oldest Irish baronetcy, which is borne by Viscount Valentia, whose ancestor became the first Irish baronet in 1620. The *P.M.G.*, however, adds that of the fifty baronets in the Commons no less than thirty-two are Radicals, and that all but six of these titles have been conferred since 1906. Which shows I was quite O.K. when some months ago I pointed out that Radical members are as hot on title-hunting as ever the Tories were!

* * *

The Kaiser's Daughter a Widow.

An officer pal in the hospital at Boulogne writes to me that it is quite true what I said the other day about the Kaiser's daughter being now a widow. He says he knew an officer who, through speaking German perfectly, had been doing a bit of espionage in the German lines, and who had been informed that the big military funeral at which the Kaiser was present was that of the Duke of Brunswick, who married the Kaiser's only daughter about a year ago. If this is so, it leaves us still wondering at the strange trick of fate which thus makes of the Kaiser's only daughter the mother of the sole male heir of all our dead and gone Hanoverian sovereigns, and direct heir to the British crown after the death of the descendants of Queen Victoria.

If the Kaiser's Daughter's Son Became Our King.

Fortunately, should such a series of deaths as occurred in the family of King George III. ever place this child upon the throne of Great Britain and Ireland, he would have arrived at an age when his relationship to the odious Kaiser would be generally forgotten. At any rate, we hope so, for otherwise his arrival on the British throne would mean a hot time for him.

* * *

The Hard Fate of the Cumberlands.

His paternal grandfather is, of course, the Duke of Cumberland, King George III,'s grandson, who lives in permanent exile at the lovely castle of Gmunden, in Austria. Duke Ernest was the third and last of the Duke of Cumberland's sons. The others both died tragically, the last of them when on his way to his brother-in-law's funeral in Schwerin, when he was thrown from his motor-car and killed. As the Duke of Cumberland should to-day have been King of Hanover, if the Prussians had not deprived his father of the crown, the Duke honestly deserves our sympathy. He has been an ill-used man from his birth.

The *Grays and Tilbury Gazette* is telling us that "Men are wanted—for Planting." Probably whilst our women are engaged in sewing.

* * *

A Yankee dentist claims that by pressure on a patient's thumb and finger-joints he can induce insensibility to pain in the teeth. Now all he has to do is to discover how to produce insensibility to pain in the patient's thumb and finger-joints.

He: "Yes, you know, I hit the bull's-eye every time."
She: "Lying, I presume."

LIVELY LITTLE LEADERS

HOW DO WE STAND?

What is the real state of affairs regarding the war (so far as civilians can get at it) at the beginning of the New Year? That is a question easier asked than answered. I think I have read most of the articles written by the learned gentlemen who are called military and naval experts during the past five months, and beyond the fact that they have helped me towards a knowledge of the strategy of war, of which I was previously ignorant, I cannot truthfully say that they have taught me much of really practical use. Experts—all kinds of experts, and not only military and naval experts—are so frightfully learned, you know, that it is very seldom you can nail them down to a plain answer to a plain question. Certainly neither Colonel Repington, of the *Times*, nor Spencer Wilkinson of the *Morning Post*, nor Colonel Maude of the *Sunday Times*, nor even the brilliant Hilaire Belloc of *Land and Water*, have answered satisfactorily to the plain man in the street the simple little question that I have put at the head of this column.

Why is this? There is, in my opinion, one very effective little answer, and here it is: Because the learned experts are so terribly frightened of giving themselves away—and the more learned they are, the worse they are. You must remember that they are not in the expert business for the purpose of helping along the rusty wheels of the rusty minds (militarily speaking) of you and me, reader. They are after far bigger game than that. They are engaged in the great big task of making (or, rather, failing to make) great, big reputations for themselves out of this great, big war. And so they are not chancing their arms too much in the way of prognostications, or prophecies, or direct statements, or distinct opinions, or anything simple like that. Not on your cokernut, as the poet put it. And so, if we want to know anything real and substantial about this war and its progress, we must shut our eyes and open our minds and see what the gods will send us. It is the only way to get at things, unless you like to tackle the task of sneaking under Lord Kitchener's bed and listening to his dreams. We must, in other words, read all the experts we can get hold of and then forget everything they have said that has the least suspicion of learning. The remainder we must let simmer in our minds until our minds, and not the experts, have found the answers to the questions we propound—found them by plain and practical means and, as a matter of pure fact, not from the experts at all. To put it in a sentence, the principal use of experts is to set our minds a-working. But the result we are after we must obtain for ourselves, until the happy moment arrives when we, too, are able to become experts, when we shall, of course, like the other learned ones, have no need to look for pure truth either for ourselves or anybody else.

I don't know how you are fixed, reader, but for myself I am sick unto death of these experts, and I am more and more driven to the conclusion that, if you want to know anything you've got to think it out for yourself. Mr. Hilaire Belloc has, it is true, made an international reputation by his articles in *Land and Water*, but then he is not a professional soldier, and therefore may naturally be expected to know something about soldiering. But even he is apt to get abstruse, not to mention the fact that, like his brethren, he is hampered by the Censors. But even allowing for all difficulties, the fact remains that the experts, as a class, tell us less than we really ought to know, and much that we could have told them for less than a tithe of the magnificent salaries which they are paid.

Take the latest naval disaster, for I put naval and military experts all of a bunch. We are told, regarding the loss of H.M.S. Formidable, that she was just an antiquated old foozler of a warship and that it really doesn't matter (apart from the loss of life) that she has gone to the bottom of the Channel. You will remember that this is exactly what we were told about H.M.S. Bulwark, H.M.S. Hogue, and all the others except Good Hope and Monmouth, about which great ships even naval experts could not for shame lie in the face of obvious truth. Now why are we told such rotten-cotton nonsense? Does it stand to reason that if H.M.S. Formidable and the other ships were old-fashioned and almost useless they would have been in commission at the time they went down? Of course it doesn't. They were not Dreadnoughts, but they were extremely useful ships for the duties that were assigned to them. If they were not, they had no right to be in commission at all, and all our geniuses at the Admiralty must be damned fools for so allowing them to be. Is it not more manly to admit at once that we have suffered serious loss, instead of treating the public as if they were a lot of blithering idiots, who are expected to think that the Navy is composed of useless and useful ships all mixed together like a lot of nursery toys, and that it is only the old and useless toys that have the infernal habit of getting occasionally broken?

But regrettable though the losses of the Navy have been, I think that the answer to the question, How do we stand at sea? must be a satisfactory answer at the beginning of the New Year. Mr. Winston Churchill has his faults, but he is not a liar, and he has assured us that we are building ships rapidly, and that we have nothing whatever to fear as regards the pre-war strength of the Navy being kept up. We can let the Navy rest for the present at that, as the Germans won't come out to fight, and we can do nothing till they do.

And how about the Army? How do we stand? The military experts don't tell us, except in the dreary, learned language of their tribe—a language that the plain man cannot understand, or cannot, at any rate, bother about translating. So I will tell you, reader, how we stand, and I will tell it in plain language. We stand on the verge of some sort of conscription, and if, when this is proposed in Parliament in a few weeks, as it is quite possible it will be, there is any sort of a hullabaloo among the goody-goody gang who have already nearly put the Empire on the rocks, we shall be in a devil of a mess. United we shall stand, and win. Divided we may fall, and lose. You will have seen in the papers during the last few days that Lord Kitchener has now almost ready for France another 600,000 men. They will be useful, but they will be almost a fleabite in face of the huge German reserves that are getting ready to come up into the firing line. And France is quietly, yet distinctly, beginning to grumble that we are not doing the full length of our little bit. We are defending twenty-five miles of the frontier. The French are defending the remaining three hundred miles. That's where we are. And our recruiting is going slow, dead slow in many counties. That's where we are, again. Parliament has already authorised Lord Kitchener to raise another million men. Where are they coming from? They are not coming at all without conscription, or some form of conscription. Think of the task of getting anywhere near Berlin! Remember that we have not yet tackled the hellish-looking defences of the German frontier. Remember that our original professional army is rapidly approaching the point when it will be *non est*—dead, wounded, or prisoners. Nothing but huge numbers can save us. Nothing but conscription can provide those numbers.

That is how we stand, dear reader, in this ancient island of ours. Do not let us with dead minds heap up our glorious dead, as we are doing, perhaps, for the mockery of history. Let us open our brains to the truth of things. Gigantic is the task, gigantic the means of victory that are ready to our hands. Let us grasp our resources, let us quit us like men and be strong.

JONATHAN GRUB STRETE.

WHO, WHY, WHEN AND WHERE.

LITTLE QUESTIONS FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE.

What is the secret about those conscription papers which have been printed for months and have never been issued by the War Office? And is it true that they are to be issued on January 15th?

* * *

Whether Prince Albert will ever return to his ship?

* * *

What were the special services which got Prince Leopold of Battenberg his G.C.V.O.?

* * *

Who sent in to a contemporary that lie about the German Crown Prince's diary having been picked up at the front and its having been sent to our Princess Mary?

* * *

Whether any of the generous Indian rajahs have been allowed to go into the firing line yet?

* * *

What has happened to the Gaekwar of Baroda's scheme for joining the forces in the field?

* * *

Whether Lady Londesborough's son, Hugo, has had any further correspondence with the pretty nurse at Boulogne? And how much the handsome present he sent her cost?

* * *

If there are any poets now left who haven't had their little rhymes on the war accepted by one or other of the papers?

* * *

When the Japanese troops are coming over? And if it is not decided that they shall not come till the climate is suitable to their peculiar constitutions?

* * *

Why the *Daily Chronicle* publishes all this twaddle about what Shaw said about Arnold Bennett, and what Arnold Bennett said about Shaw? And why these paid hacks are allowed so much latitude about the war by any responsible editor?

* * *

Why the United States Government doesn't hurry up to avenge the reign of terror and outrage prevailing in Mexico, instead of sending the British Government silly and Berlin-lie-bureau-inspired "Notes"?

* * *

If the well-known author has recovered from the shock he sustained through imagining that his drama, "The Better Man," had been pinched by a picture theatre, whereas it only turned out to be a coincidence of titles?

"If you were a brave man you would join the army."

"If it's a question of bravery, I think it was a supreme test marrying you!"

How did Sir John French enjoy his Christmas visit home?

* * *

If the Nonconformist conscience is satisfied with Sir Edward Grey's dignified explanation of the British mission to the Pope?

* * *

The identity of the sub-editor who rendered "Wordsworth's cosmic poetry" as "Wordsworth's *comic* poetry" on New Year's Day?

* * *

Is it a fact that the inhabitants of Westcliff did not even hear the gun-fire of the air-raid on Southend?

* * *

How many consignments of rifles have our Government despatched to France for the use of our Allies?

* * *

Whether a "bigger theatre required" is the real reason for "Peg o' My Heart" quitting the Comedy?

* * *

Why the French have forbidden visits of wives to their husbands at the front, yet allow other ladies to proceed almost to the fighting line?

* * *

If the fortune-tellers, crystal gazers and the like are not now having the time of their lives, and what the police think about it?

* * *

If the welcome given to the Japanese troops upon their arrival in Australia does not betoken a complete change in the attitude of the Cornstalkers towards the yellow races?

* * *

Whether Princess Christian has heard from her son Albert lately? And whether the fact that he is in hospital in Berlin has been kept back from Her Royal Highness?

* * *

If Lord Lonsdale has yet decided to go to the front?

* * *

If the *Times* and *Telegraph* were not ever so slightly unkind to a certain popular dramatist, in reviewing the plays of 1914?

* * *

What was the particular panic on Christmas Night, and why were so many officers of the "Home" Command so suddenly recalled from their festivities?

TABLOID TOPICS.

Khaki "Trilbies" are to be correct headgear. The more Du Maurier.

* * *

The Huns continue to lose ground. They never had any good ground for fighting.

* * *

A tattooed man has been washed ashore at Pevensey. The marks have not clean gone.

* * *

"War Pinch in Germany."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*
The Crown Prince's loot, presumably.

* * *

The price of flour is advancing by leaps and bounds. Moral, avoid the self-raising article.

* * *

The Kaiser's medical advisers warn him to be careful of bad weather. One way of telling him to "look out for squalls."

* * *

"Footballers' Batt. sent home."—*Express.*
The "Batt." will no doubt seize the opportunity to play "ball."

* * *

A pigeon's nest, found at St. George's Institute, was composed of nails, pins, hairpins and straw. The lady-bird's boudoir, evidently.

* * *

Woolwich has been described as "Britain's War Hive." Singular that it should busy itself in destroying everything Hunny.

* * *

Mr. G. B. Shaw in the *Daily Chronicle*:—Mr. Wells calls me muddle-headed. Muddleheaded! Me!
Well, let us say, ungrammatical.

* * *

The sale of cardboard imitations of the Iron Cross has been stopped in Germany. Presently they'll also suppress their Pinchbeck Napoleon.

* * *

The exportation of swine from Holland has been prohibited. The Germans who are interned there will thus have no chance of getting back home.

* * *

"One of our shells hit a truck, burst, and absolutely left no trace of it. Through glasses one could see it perfectly distinctly."—Letter from the front.
Perhaps Messrs. Maskelyne and Devant will note and imitate?

* * *

"We still stand firm on the old German watch," declared the German Chief of Army Administration. Except, of course, when they run away with a few of French or Belgian manufacture.

* * *

A daily paper calls a new explosive "Annihilite." This must have been used against the Austrians, because we heard a newsboy shouting the other night that the Austrian Army was "annihilited."

* * *

A writer in the *Westminster Gazette* declares that the real English equivalent of the German word "kultur" is "culture" in the sense employed by bacteriologists when breeding microbes. Thus "kultur" merely means the manufacture of Germ-huns. It has a lot to answer for at that

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EDITOR'S NOTE.

The Editor will be pleased to consider short stories, 750 to 2,000 words, and humorous topical "skits" not exceeding 1,000 words. Payment at usual rates.

THE ALIEN PERIL.

I am a law-abiding citizen, in the ordinary way, but when trodden on unduly like the proverbial worm I turn and bite, with varying success, according to the toughness of my adversary's protective cuticle.

Of course, reader, you have discovered at once that I am no story writer, and can only express my ideas indifferently on paper, and am merely recounting my unpleasant experiences as a consolation to any others who may have met with similar ill-treatment in our free and unfettered land, where the Englishman's boast has hitherto been truthfully expressed in the immortal words, "An Englishman's home is his castle."

My name is Strong, John Strong, which is sufficient guarantee that I am no alien, but British to the backbone. On Tuesday last I returned home as usual, after completing my business for the day; and, as I have been suffering from a nasty attack of influenza, it had been mutually arranged that the wife and children should not sit up for me, and I have been provided with bachelor's quarters in my home, to minimise any risk of infection to the offspring.

This arrangement has worked splendidly on former occasions, and was considered strategic from a domestic point of view.

Well, on Tuesday evening last, I let myself into "Blueberry Villa" with my well-worn latch key, somewhere about 11 p.m., saw that my supper was enticingly awaiting consumption, did the rounds of the house, visited the garden for inspection of "Roger," our guardian fox-terrier, who welcomed me with joyful demonstrations of fidelity, bolted the doors, saw that the window-fastenings were secure, and finally set to work on a stimulating supper of hot boiled onions, intended as a soporific, and a reliable remedy for the fiendish influenza from which I was suffering.

My astonishment on hearing a peremptory "rat-a-tat" on my front door was only equalled, on opening it, by the discovery of two dark objects, unmistakable as officials of the local police force, who confronted me on my doorstep.

I may mention that I am thoroughly well-known locally, no one more so, perhaps, so that the interrogation, "Is your name John Strong?" seemed infantile in its obvious stupidity. My name, moreover, is very plainly discernible on the nice new brass plate which I am proud to say decorates my front door, and announces the necessary information to all and sundry whom it may concern.

"Yes, John Strong is my name," I answered, wondering at the absurdity of a police inspector, who knew me so well, asking the question. "What can I do for you?" I added somewhat tartly, for I was in no frame of mind to stand debating my existence on the doorstep at 11.45 p.m. on a chilly night, while suffering from an attack of the "flue."

My overwhelming astonishment at being met with the rejoinder: "You are suspected of communicating with the Germans by wireless," can be better imagined than described. In fact, so astonished was I that I did a very silly thing. I said, "Oh, come in, and we will see what it is all about; but have a drop of Scotch first," for I began to feel chilly myself after our palaver on the doorstep.

"No, thank you," was the virtuous rejoinder; "but we will come in," and the two suited the action to the word.

After a few preliminaries, the inspector impressively said: "The fact is, mysterious sounds have been heard issuing from your house at night-time which are unaccountable for, unless you keep a typewriter or a wireless installation on the premises, and we are authorised to search your house from top to bottom until we discover it."

"I have no typewriter in the house, I assure you, as my business is mostly done on one at the office, and I feel the greatest relief when I am away from the

"MODERN LIFE'S" GALLERY OF WAR CELEBRITIES.

No. 4.—Field Marshal Sir John French, K.C.M.G., G.C.B., G.C.V.O.

darned thing. So far as a wireless machine is concerned, I am as ignorant of the mechanism or working of one as a babe unborn."

"Of course, we take your word, Mr. Strong, on the point, but we are compelled to satisfy the authorities that the sounds reported as coming from your house in the late hours of the night can be accounted for satisfactorily. Barge-End being an important naval and military station, it is important to take every precaution against communications with the enemy."

"Perhaps you will tell me the name of your informant?" I suggested, dimly remembering that my next-door neighbour was not on the most friendly terms since I summoned him, not many months since, for the destruction of two rather valuable fan-tail pigeons by his marauding feline.

"Oh, it is impossible to name our informant," announced the inspector.

"Well, it seems hard on me to be aroused at this untimely hour of the night, with the statement that I am a German spy, without telling me the source of your information."

But nothing would drag the name from him; and in desperation lest Mrs. Strong, the two babies and the domestic should swoop down on us and make a scene, I suggested that the proposed search should commence at once, and be despatched with as little delay as possible.

We began with the room we were in. Of course, nothing was discovered. We explored "the hall" and umbrella stand. This latter, being of uncommon pattern, caused some delay, as its unusual shape had to be satisfactorily accounted for to the devoted searcher for "wireless." The back room, the kitchen, and diminutive scullery were explored, the cellar was sounded and prodded, the floor scrutinised, and any recent cracks or crevices looked upon with the natural suspicion of the detective mind.

Having explored every room, cupboard and crevice in the house, I had to protest against the bombardment of the wife's bedroom and the servant's attic, with the stipulation that they could be overhauled the next morning, if necessary.

With no success, we all three returned to the dining-room, and things seemed to have reached a crisis, when the inspector, evidently chagrined at finding no trace of anything electrical, almost burst as the sudden inspiration dawned upon him: "The garden! we have not searched the garden."

My face fell. I felt it. I saw a wave of complacency overspread the bucolic features of Inspector Flatt. He evidently mistook my chagrin at having to explore the garden, which is a fair-sized one, with a lantern at 12.30 p.m., and I an invalid in the third degree of influenza.

"Yes, the garden!" he triumphantly said. He glanced at his inferior, and a knowing look passed between the two.

Excusing myself for a moment while I put on a thick dressing-gown and fetched a lantern, I left the two explorers for wireless alone. What passed in my absence I do not know, and care less, but there was an air of determination and conquest in sight, which would have been obvious to the most casual observer, but particularly to me, when I returned to the room equipped for the garden survey.

Whatever the neighbours must have thought, if any saw three mysterious beings prodding every tree, and exhaustively examining the diminutive flagstaff, which daily displays my patriotic fervour, I cannot say. The garden was encircled, still nothing suspicious was forthcoming.

Suddenly Inspector Flatt's gaze rested on some tumble-down cottages which abut on the off-side of my premises. "How long have those been in ruins?" he asked.

"Blest if I know," I answered truthfully; "before I rented the house, I believe."

"You know well enough, but won't tell. You had better own up; this may be more serious than you seem to think. You had better confess, and you will be treated leniently."

"I can't confess what I don't know," I ejaculated feebly, feeling dead tired of the fruitless search, and longing to finish the hot supper, which I had left almost untasted when the inspector arrived.

We were just returning to the house when Flatt—Inspector Flatt, I beg his pardon—suddenly stood still, raising an admonitory finger, which compelled silence.

Suddenly a mysterious "Tick-tack, tick-tick-tack, tick-tack," sounded not far away, and as suddenly ceased.

"There, I told you so," whispered Flatt, in suppressed but victorious tones. (For the life of me I shall never respect the man again, and, consequently, dub him Flatt, without the inspectorial prefix.)

A dead silence of some seconds ensued, and once more the mysterious sound, "Tick-tack, tick-tack, tick-tick-tack," and silence once more.

"I told you you had better confess at once; and it is too late now, and the full consequences will fall on you now for impeding justice."

Instead of the startled look of conscious guilt which Flatt expected to see on my guileless face, I could not restrain a broad smile, for light had dawned at last as to the origin of the unfounded rumours which had gathered round my once respected household.

"If you will return to the house I can explain all, and I think you will be sorry for all the trouble you have given me and yourself over a most absurd affair," I remarked.

"Not rather, my fine chap. We have scotched you, and we mean to get the credit for it."

"You won't come in and have a whisky-and-soda, first?"

"No, certainly not, on duty."

"Oh, very well," I said complacently. "Shall I tell you what the supposed 'Marconi' really is?" I queried.

"We shall find out soon enough," he replied, with the innate politeness of the rural police.

To bring matters to a crisis, I took the initiative, and softly murmured, "Roger!"

"Tick-tack, tick-tick-tack," came the response. Again I murmured the dog's name. "Tick-tack, tick-tick-tack," again sounded on the midnight air.

"If you go forward ten paces," I said in desperation, "you will discover the whole Marconi installation which I possess; but don't venture too close or you may receive a shock from the powerful current which sends off the waves. That odd-looking structure against the wall is the place."

Discreetly Flatt and his flat-footed assistant advanced eight paces. Then a commotion ensued . . . . and it will be some time before the nerve of those indefatigable workers in the cause of justice is completely restored.

Roger, my old dog, bounded out to the uttermost limit of his chain, and annexed no small portion of the nethermost garments of the too adventurous assistant. I called him off, none too soon. "Lie down, Roger," and the faithful old dog came to heel at once, and as I was heartily sick of the whole adventure, I placed the lantern in the entrance to the kennel, "Now, inspector, you can see for yourself the working of the wireless is nothing more than the pleasure my old dog shows by wagging his tail against a piece of loose tin at the back of his kennel. If you are convinced, and are satisfied with your night's work, I wish you good-night."

Crestfallen and dismayed, the two left me at the gate. When they had gone about ten paces, I politely inquired if they would have a whisky-and-soda, but I received no reply.

Such is gratitude.

WILL ENBY.

ROUGE AND RUFFLES.

London Lights.

Isn't London lonely? One can walk through street after street for miles without ever meeting a friendly face. The houses slip by, blind walls, the habitations of strangers. The shops blink coldly with staring eyes. At night the very lights hold aloof, holding out orange hands only to the people they know—the people of theatre and supper-land, silk-stockinged people, gorgeous costly-jewelled flamingoes poised for a moment on the dark pavements as they alight from their luxurious cars. London isn't kind to the worker; she is, as the French would term it, "très snob." There are people who rave about the quietness and dullness of country life, but give me town any day for boredom. In the country there are green things—all your friends. Even in winter the trees are full of secrets and sparrows; the whole sky bares its breast to you, unstained by house roofs, unspotted by chimney pots; the sulkiest clod will give you a "good morning" as he passes, and every soul in the neighbourhood will know your business better than you do yourself. Inconvenient at times, perhaps. But it makes you feel far more important to be talked about, and a scandal made of your harmless talk about the weather with the Squire's second son—home on leave—"I seed 'ur, and he was that close to 'ur you couldn't have stuck a leaf in between"—than it does to have your sins of commission or omission, your new hat, or even the transformation of your best young man into a khaki warrior, pass utterly unnoticed. I don't see why the limelight of a little notoriety should be considered the sole prerogative of actor-managers. Limelight is a very useful asset for anybody to possess, let me tell you, even if you pay for it yourself—like the actor-managers.

Old Henpeckt: "Always the same; no consideration for me! The Lord knows how I'll get on when I'm laid up with gout."

Young Wife: "Well, at any rate you'll have the consolation of knowing that you have at last brought me to your feet."

The Bishop's Bee.

One Bishop advocated the non-payment of separation allowances to soldiers' unofficial wives. Here is another Bishop, his Durham Lordship, forbidding prayers for animals engaged in the war, on the ground that "It has never been the custom of the Church to pray for any other beings than those whom we think of as rational." But I have met four-legged creatures far more endowed with sense than some human beings, and there is no denying the fact that war would be, to a great extent, impossible without the aid of our dumb friends. Therefore, why shouldn't we pray for them as well as all those other brave bearers of the war's burden at the front? I don't suppose the horse who draws the guns appreciates the pain of a shrapnel wound in any less degree than the man who wields the gun. If any words of mine would help to save one of our four-legged defenders at the front, I would willingly say them, even at the risk of offending the Bishop of Durham. And anyway, what exactly is a 'rational being'? Who ever, to start with, heard of a rational woman or a sane lover? Why, I am sure there is more wisdom concealed behind the green eyes of the grey Persian cat, who sits on my writing table even now, than there is in the whole of me. I am sure Madam Green-Eyes has never committed even an indiscretion in the whole of her sleek well-fed life. Perhaps, in some other existence, as an Egyptian princess—but that is another matter altogether.

* * *

Muffs!

I don't quite know why we are supposed to carry muffs now with one's dinner frocks. They are such flimsy, wispy things of chiffon and artificial roses and infinitesimal pieces of fur, that they can hardly be considered as chest protectors. Perhaps, however, the modern maid has designed them as a hint to the youth who lingers beside her that one muff is sufficient; perhaps she has found that more than one pair of hands can securely be accommodated from prying eyes within its gauzy depths on certain occasions; perhaps she has merely discovered yet another way of spending money. Women are strange economists. They never by any chance forget to haggle over a cab-fare; they will fight like savages over a soiled bargain, marked down from three shillings to two and eleven-three, and yet they will cheerfully waste guineas upon a trifle of lace called a "boudoir cap" or a piece of gathered gauze, called an "evening muff."

* * *

A Smash—and a Moral.

There was a moon last night—a duck of a moon—slim and curved and arched like the silver slipper of a young girl. While I was looking at it, the cold January wind slipped under my arm through the open window and smashed a bit of old china—my solitary piece of Pekin—standing on the shelf just behind. It came from a mandarin's house, and used to tell me all sorts of weird doings concerning that home of red lacquer and pig-tails. There was one story in particular about the almond-eyed daughter of the home and the love messages on her paper fan—but I musn't tell you that—s—sh—. Anyway, my vase was broken, my beautiful hand-painted vase all rioting with gorgeous colours. Still, I have picked up the bits and they have gone to be mended. I don't suppose it will ever look quite the same again—my porcelain betrayer of secrets—but, at least something will remain. That's the great secret of life. Whatever happens nothing can quite smash it all to bits. Something must remain.

LOUISE HEILGERS.

BY THE WAY.

While everybody is still talking about "David Copperfield," there "jumps to the mind" (as we say in France) an incident that happened in the old *Idler* office a few years ago. Mr. Frank Murray came in one day, and offered Jerome K. Jerome £50 for 3,000 words about his "favourite book" for "Munsey's Magazine." Jerome's favourite turned out to be "Copperfield," and shortly afterwards he perpetrated a book called "Paul Kelver," which is essentially Dickens-and-water. In other words, if there hadn't been a Paul Dombey there would probably not have been any Paul Kelver.

* * *

Our foes are not fighting us on any very chivalrous lines, a fact that gives point to this story of a taunt levelled at General Lee, the Confederate Commander-in-Chief, by a wounded German-American soldier on the field of Gettysburg. As General Lee and his staff rode away from that defeat, this wounded Federal shouted in their faces, "Hurrah for the Union!" The gallant Lee looked down at him and said earnestly, "I hope you'll soon be well, my son." "I was so horrified at having taunted him in the hour of his reverse," wrote the German-Yankee, "that I cried myself to sleep on the bloody ground." Such was the chivalry of 1863. How is it now, in 1915?

* * *

Is the heroic death of Garibaldi's grandson at the front calculated to "buck up" the Italian attitude to the war? I hope so, anyhow. How his illustrious grandsire loved "you English"! After his exertions had placed the crown of the Two Sicilies on Victor Emmanuel's head, Garibaldi wanted to get back to "... island home, Capera. "But there are no steamers running," said King Victor. "If needs be," replied the Liberator, "I will ask my friend Admiral Mundy for a passage on a British ship." And Jessie White Mario tells how two Jack-tars ("with H.M.S. *Hannibal* on their caps"), at the crisis of the battle of Volturno, took Garibaldi a pail of water, a basket of figs, and a tin of English biscuits. "What, are we encouraging Queen Victoria's sailors to desert?" asked Garibaldi. "Devil a bit!" replied the Tars. "We are just out for a bit of fun."

* * *

"No troops should be kept back as a strategic ... serve," says the great Clausewitz, on whose dicta the War Lord's plan of campaign is largely modelled—and I gather that this accounts for the Prussian plan of rushing every possible man and gun to the firing-line at the onset. It is a scheme that has numerous illustrations, as, for example, in 1806, when there might have been no German downfall at Jena if they hadn't kept back 45,000 troops in Brandenburg and East Prussia. Napoleon put it more tersely when he said that "it is impossible to be too strong at the decisive point." But then he added, "There are many good generals in Europe, but they see too many things at once. I see only one thing, *the enemy's main army*, and I concentrate all my efforts to destroy it."

* * *

Apropos my remarks last week about Rudyard Kipling's early days on the Lahore *Civil and Military Gazette*, a correspondent writes: "I was much amused at the excerpts from Kipling's 'Confessional.' I was sub-editor and general factotum on the paper a few years ago, and the paper was then much as it had been in one day—20 years previously—except in one respect: the telephone had gone! Telephony was in its infancy more or less, in the '80's, and the *C. and M.* had only one instrument. This stood on the 'sub.'s' desk. The result was that, just as he was putting the finishing touches to a ditty or ballad which was to become a classic, the bell would ring, and the exasperated poet would break off to assure somebody that he certainly could *not* have that saddle finished by 6 p.m., nor did he see any chance of that case of Mumm being round by tiffin-time. And so on.

* * *

"The *C. and M.* had, and still has, a 'jobbing' department, and R. K. often had moments of inspiration roughly broken in upon by requests for quotations for the printing of visiting cards or hand-bills. One blazing morning—blazing's a good word, in the circumstances—I threw the telephone instrument at a 'chuprassi,' and it had, when I was in his shoes, never been reinstalled. Advertisers frequently checked their ... through Asia to come in and see R. K. ... room. I used to do a good trade in chips from his chair and table at Rs. 15 a chip, and Rumour, like the lying jade she is, said I had a monthly contract with a furniture man in the Kashmiri bazar to keep me supplied.

* * *

"Rukn Din, the foreman printer, ... he mentions, retired soon after I got to Lahore. His velvet coat, with gold braid and silk unmentionables—do the printers in Milford Lane wear velvet

First Manager (gloomily): "I don't know how to get an audience."
Second Manager (cheerily): "Dead easy, dear boy. Put on an all-star show and admit soldiers free."

coats, with gold braid, and silk unmentionables?—as he swaggered round the city of Ranjit Singh, bore testimony to his thrift during his working life. Mahmood—not Mahmond, as your printer spells him—is, I believe, still at work. He has never been able to save a 'pie,' as his establishments are a constant drain on his pocket. Both men used to talk an extraordinary mélange of English printer's slang and Hindustani; 'Arda column mangte'—I want half a column—'do column overset'—2 columns overset—'stereo-wala padl gia'—'the stereo-man's gone off his head'—and so on. Just one more stray memory of days in the Shiny. Nikka Singh, the Sikh chief cashier—who would always let me 'sub' my screw (at a fair interest, payable to Nikka Singh, and not to my employers!)—was there in Kipling's day. So there was no grading income-tax. For Nikka Singh was the local income-tax collector, and used to deduct the tax from our cheques before we ever touched them."

* * *

I received a letter this week from a "Tommy" of the Manchester Regiment which seems to me typical of the fine sporting spirit of the rank and file of the British Army. In propounding a query with regard to a certain little affair which covered a section of our army with glory, he proceeds: "I would be very much obliged if you would let me know if I am right or not, as *I have just returned from the front* (the italics are mine), from the district where the action took place, and between me and you I have got a bit of money on your answer." And the address from which he writes is one of the wards of a military hospital!

* * *

We have had our say in these columns about the difficulties of serving one's country, when it is a matter of getting an appointment at the War Office. But we have never complained about the said difficulties, knowing, as we do, that no such *impasse* as now faces the War Office should ever have fallen to it under its present cadre. The War Office of Lord Haldane's regime can no more cope with an army of nearly three million men than the paltry hundred thousand Tommies who were sent to Mons could stem the tide of Germany's immense army corps. So everybody at the War Office has our sympathy, and we commend the officials there to the sincere commiseration of their countrymen. They are doing a lot of work for which they will probably never get a "Thank you," and doing it as well as anybody else in the Empire *could* do it. And they have a lot to put up with. Here is one instance:—

* * *

The father of a chap who desires to "do his bit" went to the War Office the other day to make personal application for a commission for his son. After remaining in the ante-room some time, he got ratty and prepared to chuck up the attempt, but was intercepted by a commissionaire, who got him an immediate interview with the officer who doles out the commissions. The elderly applicant, full of parental pride, and doubtless feeling that he was finally settling the Germans by putting his son up for a job in the Army, received business-like replies from the officer, and then went away and wrote a nasty letter to the *Times* about the way he was treated. He says that when he asked the officer what rig-out his son would require, the officer replied, "Ask any decent tailor; he'll tell you!"

* * *

This was just the sort of reply that any officer worth his salt *would* have given. It is succinct, and is all that any ordinary man would expect. It is the tailor's business to find rig-outs for officers, but some of the pot-bellied old squires who go to the War Office for commissions for their sons have an idea that an officer at the War Office ought to pull his forelock at their approach, and make them feel that they are saving the Empire.

A nut of a soldier called Cholmondeley,
Proposed to a French maid most colmondeley:
"Oh, smile on my suit,"
He begged her, "Pray do't!"
She did, for she thought it fit rolmondeley.

Hence they are deeply offended at their requests being regarded as a purely business-like matter. The *Times* correspondent says he "walked out of the War Office, leaving the other two fathers whom he found there still waiting"! Which was the real patriot?

* * *

I wonder, by the way, why this correspondent wrote his letter to the *Times?* Perhaps he thought the War Office would be more likely to see his little grizzle, and suffer agonies on its account. Or perhaps the old buffer prefers the *Times* for its red-tapery. Personally, I rather like the *Times*, but at least once every day I am compelled to ask myself one question: Who is the literary crackpot who ordains that such words as "cooperation" and "coordination" shall appear?

* * *

Nobody ever heard co-operation pronounced "cooperation," or co-ordination pronounced "coordination." Yet ever since Harmsworths have owned this journal these pedantries have been foisted upon the sub-editors to the keen annoyance of the readers of the paper. For the word "cooperation" occurs at least once every day in the newspaper week, and it is a real source of objection, for the *Times* will never convert any other journal to so hideous a spelling. Amongst other tit-bits of pedantry in the *Times* office is its persistence in spelling Tsarevitch "Cesarevitch!"

THE LOITERER.

Baron Von Gayl denounces the pessimistic spirit shown by certain of his countrymen. Case of a Gayl telling us which way the wind is blowing.

IN STAGELAND.

Of the New Year "shows" that space did not permit of my touching on last week, the Bensonian season of "Henry the Fifth," at the Shaftesbury, is one of the most interesting. It is interesting because Messrs. Benson and Courtneidge between them have "produced" it so well, and because of the great number of old Bensonians who have flocked to the managerial banner. Indeed, with the exceptions of Henry Ainley and Alfred Brydone, it is somewhat difficult to find a prominent "Benson boy" missing from the long cast.

Shakespeare's battle-drama is essentially a man's play. One may dismiss the good work of Jean Sterling Mackinlay as Queen Katharine, of Evelyn Hall as the Queen of France, and Rose Edouin as the Hostess, in a line or so, noting meanwhile that the Page is played by Alice De Grey. As a set-off to this, we have Otto Stuart as "Chorus"—invariably played by a woman. If Mr. Benson's King Henry be not quite in the heroic mould, he certainly gives the noble passage beginning, "Once more unto the breach, dear friends," with fiery eloquence. A. E. George, as Fluellen; Chas. Doran, as the Constable of France; Baliol Holloway, as Pistol; and Harcourt Williams, as the French King, all do especially good work.

At the Lyceum, "Jack and the Beanstalk" proved a big attraction from the word "go." It does not depend upon the great names of its interpreters, for comparatively few of these are London "stars." All-round excellence and plenty of fun is, instead, the keynote, and pretty Miss Doris Dean makes a charming Fair Rosamund. She is well supported by, among others, Victor Kelly, Elsie Piddock, and Louie Beckman as the immortal "Jack."

"On His Majesty's Service" appears to be another winner for the Prince's Theatre. It is a revival of "On *Her* Majesty's Service," which enjoyed a conspicuous success some fourteen years ago. It is not perhaps high art, and I certainly don't propose to criticise it "as sich." Henry Lonsdale is the inevitable hero, Lillian Hallows the inevitable (and naughty) adventuress, and Rose Ralph the inevitable (and long-suffering) heroine. The audience fairly shouted their approval when a Naval Brigade, all complete, arrived during the third act, and proceeded to pound away at the enemy with its maxims.

It is claimed for "Aladdin," at the London Opera House, that it was "written, composed, rehearsed, and produced" all in fifteen days! If for no other reason, this panto. "goes" like wildfire, because we have none other than Claire Romaine as Aladdin, and Billie Barlow as Pekoe. The ballet of a hundred girls is also "great."

From the current revival of "The New Clown" by James Welch, one sadly misses the striking figure and gorgeous declamation of Edward Sass as the immortal ring-master. In fact, this reproduction is none too well acted, though Nina Boucicault is almost as good as ever in her original rôle of the "star" who renews her acquaintance with the "ring."

Miss Ellaline Terriss's return from "the front" was quite in the nature of a *tour de force*. She is always lovable, and she made herself especially so in accepting the greeting given her by an uproarious Lyric audience in "The Earl and the Girl." The honours were to some extent shared by Florence Lloyd and Basil Foster, the latter of whom brought in a happy reference to Miss Terriss's Continental experiences. Needless to say, her "Little Bit of String" went better than ever, and the Lyric won't be empty yet awhile.

It was a happy thought of G. du Maurier's to bring forward again that prince of cracksmen, "Raffles." Its sentiment and comicality delight us as much as ever, and it is so well acted—G. Du Maurier himself, Lyston Lyle, Hilda Moore, and Jules Shaw as the detective. Nor must I forget Kyrle Bellew's niece, who makes a palpable hit in the small but effective rôle of Gwendolen Couran.

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OURSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE.

A STAR TURN.

Theatrical Manager: "I admit, Miss De Vere, that I have had a most successful season!"

Miss De Vere: "Then you can thank your 'stars' for that, Mr. Limelight."

* * *

AN EVERYDAY OCCURRENCE.

Magistrate (in the court-room): "I've lost my hat."

Lawyer: "That's nothing. I lost a suit here yesterday."

* * *

PRINCIPAL DIFFERENCE.

Sarcastic Guest: "You call this an omelet, do you? Would it have been any different if I had ordered scrambled eggs?"

Waiter Girl: "Yes, sir. There would have been a difference of twopence in the bill."

* * *

A HAPPY POSSIBILITY.

"Let's drop into this restaurant."

"I don't believe I care to eat anything."

"Well, come in and get a new hat for your old one, anyway." —*Boston Transcript.*

* * *

NO CRITERION.

Mrs. Wood: But perhaps your husband really understands you better than you think.

Mrs. Goode: Nonsense, my dear! Just let me show you the Christmas present he gave me.

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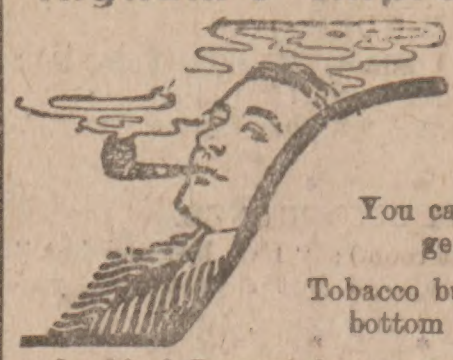

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